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Richard Nixon And The Cuban Fiasco

In view of the insincerity of the man, it sometimes seems quite remarkable that Richard Nixon ever came as close as he did to winning the presidency of the United States last fall.

Back in the days of the Truman administration, Nixon used to express shock and indignation when some office-holders accepted gifts of canteenas, deep freezers, mink coats and other items. Yet it was revealed in 1952, when he was running for vice president, that Nixon himself had taken a gift of more than \$18,000 in cash while he was a member of the United States Senate. He explained away this gift of cash with his famous "Checkers Show" in the midst of the 1952 presidential campaign. One point he made was that in spite of the \$18,000 gift, his wife still was compelled to wear cloth coats instead of mink coats.

More recently Mr. Nixon has been worried, it seems, about the "morality" of this country giving aid to Cuban rebels against Fidel

Castro. Last Oct. 21, for instance, Nixon charged in a television debate that John F. Kennedy's rashness in suggesting that the United States back anti-Castro forces in and out of Cuba was "probably the most dangerously irresponsible" proposal of the campaign.

As a matter of fact, the Eisenhower-Nixon administration had been making secret preparations for the invasion of Cuba for nearly six months when Mr. Nixon expressed such great shock at the Kennedy suggestion that the Republican administration should be doing more to aid the anti-Castro forces. It was even hoped in Republican circles that the Cuban invasion could be sprung during the campaign to help the Nixon campaign.

Now that President Kennedy has made the horrible mistake of going along with the Eisenhower administration's plans for a CIA-sponsored invasion of Cuba by far too few ill-equipped rebels, Mr. Nixon is going about the country expressing anguish that, "When the chips were down, we backed down." He is implying, of course, that the United States should have given air cover and other direct military assistance to the invasion.

What makes Nixon's criticism so insincere is that the decision to withdraw U. S. forces from the Cuban invasion was made in December, during the Eisenhower-Nixon administration.

President Kennedy has accepted full responsibility for the entire Cuban fiasco, and this was a manly and courageous thing to do. By doing so, he saved his worthy intelligence and military officials from being humiliatingly investigated by Congress. And the two persons in the world with the least right to make any critical comment at all about President Kennedy's Cuban mistakes are Dwight D. Eisenhower and Richard Nixon.